

**THE IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES OF FLORIDA AND JOSÉ MARTÍ IN CUBAN
INDEPENDENCE AND THE DAWN OF THE AMERICAN CENTURY**

**2023 NEH SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA
JUNE 19-JULY 14, 2023**

PROGRAM OF STUDY

The goal of the Institute is to enhance and encourage the teaching of this important chapter in U.S. history, and for this reason its constituent parts –expert lectures, guided reading and discussion, site visits to significant archives and landmarks– are all directed toward the development of innovative syllabi, course modules, and/or research projects designed to enrich the college curriculum and disseminate this history. Additionally, participants interested in preparing course modules in Spanish will have the full support of the co-directors and visiting faculty, almost all of whom are fluent in Spanish, and many of whom have experience teaching in foreign language programs. Our 2019 institute brought together scholars and faculty from the fields of History, Latin American/Latino Studies, Sociology, Political Science, Journalism, and Language and Literature. As such, it was characterized by the lively exchange of viewpoints between and among the NEH scholars, visiting faculty, and institute directors, all of whom brought their disciplinary expertise to bear. All visiting faculty are asked to share their pedagogical approaches to the teaching of this material and to be prepared to answer questions regarding this matter. Furthermore, there are weekly workshops and breakout sessions dedicated to project development organized around related topics of interest.

The 4-week program of study is organized in accordance with the three principal elements that make up this extraordinary history. During the first week, participants will come to know the history of the immigrant communities of Ybor City, West Tampa and Key West during the last two decades of the 19th century, their origins, settlement, rapid growth, and the novel forms of civil society they created, blending old world traditions with the new economic and social realities of their adopted nation. All aspects of these communities will be explored, including political activism, labor strife, social organization, race relations, gender roles, and cultural production. During week two, the Institute will train a critical eye on the life and work of José Martí, specifically his role in establishing the Cuban Revolutionary Party among the cigar workers of Tampa and Key West, and their influence on his political thought and revealing analyses of U.S. government and society during the Gilded Age. Moving beyond the historical canon, special emphasis will be applied to the role of Cuban women and Black Cubans in the articulation of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, the independence project, the war effort, and the international labor struggle. In week three, the institute will examine the rationale for the U.S. intervention in the struggle for Cuban independence and analyze the far-reaching consequences that the Spanish-American War had on these immigrant communities, on the course of Cuban history, and on the role of the United States in the global distribution of power, consequences that to this day reverberate through politics, history, culture and economics. During the final week, participants will have ample time to complete the teaching modules and/or research projects they have been developing and sharing in the workshops, advising sessions and research time afforded them in the previous weeks. An additional workshop on conducting digital humanities research, and another on presenting their work in a conference format, will be offered at the start of the week.

Free transportation to the USF Special Collections, Ybor City and/or Tampa Bay History Center will be available all week for any participant interested in availing themselves of these resources. The Institute will culminate in a two-day “professional conference” in which participants will present their work publicly for peer-review and feedback.

All core readings will be made available via a secure on-line portal at least one month prior to the start of the Institute, and all sources listed in the General Bibliography will be placed on reserve at the University of Tampa library for exclusive use by the participants for the duration of the institute.

WEEK ONE: THE IMMIGRANT WORLDS OF YBOR CITY, WEST TAMPA AND KEY WEST, 1860-1900

Participants will receive an immersive introduction to the unique immigrant communities that took shape in Florida during the late nineteenth century, when, for reasons both geopolitical and economic, thousands of Cubans, Sicilians and Spaniards converged on Key West initially, and then onward to Ybor City, West Tampa, Ocala and beyond as part of the booming cigar industry of that time. The dynamic and complex social fabric that was formed from this multicultural encounter in a forgotten corner of the deep South would come to form an important base of revolutionary activity that would lead to Cuban independence, while also establishing the cultural identity of Tampa itself, a city that retains to this day the physical spaces and ethnic identifications first established by its immigrant founders. The week will begin with an inaugural presentation held at the Tampa Bay History Center where **Rodney Kite-Powell**, Director of the Touchton Map Library and Saunders Foundation Curator of History, will trace the history of how a forgotten hamlet in the deep South was transformed into the cigar manufacturing capital of the world in the latter half of the 19th century. After lunch, participants will return to campus via water taxi for institute orientation, formal introductions and socializing.

Over the next four days, we will explore the rich cultural complexity of these communities through lecture, discussion and site visits. On Tuesday morning, participants will visit the *Círculo Cubano* (known locally as the Cuban Club), one of three surviving mutual aid societies created by this immigrant community, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In its restored theater, **Dr. Gary Mormino**, professor emeritus of Florida history at USF and co-author of *The Immigrant World of Ybor City: Italians and Their Latin Neighbors* (U of Illinois P, 1987), will explain the social organization of Ybor City and its complex relationship to the surrounding community. Immediately afterward, Dr. Mormino will lead a walking tour of this vibrant urban community, which has preserved a number of its important historic landmarks. The area is undergoing significant gentrification, and so we will be joined on our tour by Cuban-American real estate developer Ariel Quintela, whose Ybor City residential buildings are attempting to reconcile economic development with historic preservation. After lunch, we’ll take a guided tour of the Ybor City State Museum, where many of the artifacts that defined the daily labor of these communities, including restored homes, cigar-making stations and a great many publications and photographs are preserved.

Wednesday will be dedicated to understanding the social complexity of these communities. In the morning, **Dr. Kenya Dworkin**, author of the forthcoming *Cuban Theater, American Stage: Performance, Politics, and Race in Tampa, Florida, 1886-1960*, will discuss the cultural development of Ybor City through the lens of its autochthonous theater, and through its texts engage participants in an interpretative debate around ideology, race, gender, inter-ethnic relations,

and identity. Over the past fifteen years, Dr. Dworkin has recovered over 50 unpublished plays written by and for these communities, plays that collectively articulate what she refers to as a “curriculum of culture,” one that gives profound insight into the racial tensions, gender roles and class consciousness of the era. One striking aspect of this community was the fact that the cigar factories of Ybor City were integrated, and Afro-Cubans of both sexes worked alongside their Spanish, Cuban and Italian compatriots. That will be the theme of the afternoon seminar, when **Dr. Susan D. Greenbaum**, author of *More than Black: Afro-Cubans in Tampa* (UP of Florida 2002), will discuss the Afro-Cuban community of Ybor City, starting with its role in the struggle for Cuban independence, their central place in José Martí’s vision of a free Cuba, and the consequences of Jim Crow on their lifestyle and economic prospects in their adopted country after Martí’s death. The week’s academic lectures will conclude on Friday when **Dr. Gerald Poyo** will discuss the evolution of Key West’s revolutionary community over three decades (1868-1898). Dr. Poyo, in addition to being a distinguished historian of the period, is also the great-grandson of one of Martí’s closest collaborators and co-founder of the Cuban Revolutionary Party in Key West, José Dolores Poyo.

On Thursday afternoon, participants will receive a presentation by USF Associate Librarian Andy Huse, who will then lead a guided tour of the University of South Florida’s Special Collections, which houses its extensive Ybor City, West Tampa and Spanish-American War Collections. These collections contain extensive repositories of photographs, newspapers, correspondence, unpublished manuscripts, and other historical materials from the period we are studying, the vast majority of which have not been digitized, and can only be consulted in person. Mr. Huse will orient and assist our participants in locating and accessing materials of interest, and those interested in spending extra time researching the archives will be afforded the opportunity to do so and granted full privileges for the duration of the institute. Free transportation from the University of Tampa to the USF Library will be available for participants throughout the institute. Week one will conclude with the establishment of working groups self-selected by topic and research/teaching interests. A detailed calendar of lectures and activities, together with a comprehensive bibliography of pertinent readings is included in the complete syllabus (see Attachment 2).

WEEK TWO: JOSÉ MARTÍ AND THE ÉMIGRÉ COMMUNITIES AT THE INTERSECTION OF EMPIRES

In Week Two we will turn our attention to José Martí. **Co-director Dr. James López** will provide an overview of Martí’s life and work on Monday morning and contextualize the list of Martí readings to be discussed and debated at week’s end. López will emphasize Martí’s relationship to the Cuban émigré communities of Florida and the Gulf region, and their influence on his political thought and his vision of a future Cuban republic. On Tuesday morning, **Dr. Lisandro Pérez**, author of *Sugar, Cigars and Revolution: The Making of Cuban New York* (NYU Press, 2018) will talk about the vibrant history of the Cuban exile community of New York in the 19th century, as well as Martí’s complicated relationship to it during the 15 years he resided in that city. That evening will be reserved for a special event open to the community at large. The **Honorable Emiliano J. Salcines**, retired federal judge of the District Court of Appeals and highly-respected local historian, is responsible for having meticulously documented all the known visits by José Martí to Ybor City, West Tampa and Key West. This presentation is an incredibly informative and

entertaining trip through time, and includes a great number of historical artifacts and photographs, bringing to life the propitious encounter between Martí and the cigar workers of Tampa. On Wednesday morning, **Dr. Ada Ferrer**, Julius Silver Professor of History and Latin American and Caribbean History at NYU and author of *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-98*. (U of North Carolina Press, 1999) will take us past many of the inherited notions regarding Martí's thinking, and through her lecture, titled "Cuba and Beyond: Martí on Race, Empire, and Revolution," open up new avenues for debate and insight into his writing that reveal him as a figure both of and ahead of his time. Dr. Ferrer's latest book, *Cuba: An American History* (Scribner, 2021) was recently awarded the 2022 Pulitzer Prize in History. The following morning, **Dr. Lillian Guerra**, author of an extensive and widely-honored bibliography on Cuban history, including *The Myth of José Martí: Conflicting Nationalisms in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005), will expose the complicated ideological legacy of José Martí, and how he has been selectively utilized by conflicting groups in both the U.S. and Cuba ever since his untimely death in 1895. On Thursday afternoon, Drs. Ferrer and Guerra will join Dr. López in a panel discussion on the assigned Martí readings and engage the participants in a critical reevaluation of some of his most iconic essays. That evening we will screen the biopic *El ojo del canario* ('The Eye of the Canary,' 2011), by renowned Cuban director Fernando Pérez. This film imaginatively recreates the early life of Martí from age 9 until his imprisonment and exile from Cuba at age 17. The viewing will be followed by an informal discussion in light of the week's explorations of Martí's writings. Throughout the week, we have scheduled advising sessions and research time for participants to continue developing their projects individually and through one-on-one and group meetings.

WEEK THREE: THE SPANISH-CUBAN-AMERICAN WAR: CUBAN INDEPENDENCE AND U.S. INTERVENTION

The goal of Week Three is to understand the reasons for the U.S. intervention in the struggle for Cuban Independence in the Spanish-American War, and the far-reaching consequences this would have for both the U.S. and Cuba during the 20th century. We will also explore the role that the Cuban émigré communities of Florida and throughout the Americas played in the planning and prosecution of this war, and how the U.S. occupation of Cuba effected these communities. This discussion will begin on Monday with *New York Times* deputy op-ed editor **Clay Risen**, author most recently of *The Crowded Hour: Theodore Roosevelt, the Rough Riders and the Dawn of the American Century* (Scribner, 2019). Mr. Risen's presentation, which centers on U.S. perspectives on the war and rationales for intervention, will be complemented on Wednesday by **Dr. Bonnie Lucero**, whose book, *Revolutionary Masculinity and Racial Inequality: Gendering War and Politics in Central Cuba, 1895-1902* (U of New Mexico P, 2018), views the conflict through the lens of the Cuban independence fighters and civilian population, too often left out of the historiography of the period, and yet absolutely central to understanding the Cuban Republic that would emerge from the conflict, and the complex relationship it would maintain with the United States. This understanding will be enriched further on Thursday morning, when **Dr. Dalia Caraballo Muller**, author of *Cuban Émigrés and Independence in the Nineteenth-Century Gulf World* (U of North Carolina P, 2017) discusses the shared yet diverse experiences of the many émigré communities beyond Florida as they adapted to their new environments while organizing and promoting the anti-colonial struggle in Cuba. Understanding the transnational and geopolitical operations of the Cuban Revolutionary Party as expressed through these exile communities in

Mexico, Jamaica, Costa Rica and throughout the Americas helps us grasp the complexities of bringing about a successful war of liberation, one that was mediated and transformed by the U.S. intervention in Cuba. Drs. Lucero and Caraballo Muller will debate these multiple perspectives on Thursday afternoon via a panel discussion led by **Dr. Denis Rey**, co-director of the Institute.

The history of the U.S. intervention in Cuba is closely tied to the physical space in which this Institute will take place. The commanding officers for U.S. forces heading to Cuba, including Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Riders, were encamped at the ornate Tampa Bay Hotel, now Plant Hall, the main administrative center of the University of Tampa and the city's most iconic building. Participants will be offered a guided tour of the Henry B. Plant Museum, located on the south wing of Plant Hall, a National Historic Landmark, including a special exhibit on its significance during the early stages of the Spanish-American War.

On Friday morning, **Dr. Kelley Kreitz** of Pace University will present on “Revolution and *Latinidad* in the Nineteenth-Century U.S.-based Spanish-Language Press.” As mentioned previously, the Center for José Martí Studies Affiliate at the University of Tampa has embarked on a multi-year collaborative project to recover and digitize the hundreds of newspapers produced by the Cuban émigré communities of Florida during this period. Dr. Kreitz is a specialist in 19th print culture, and is working with us to study and preserve these important historical resources. Her presentation will be augmented by a workshop the following Monday morning led by the Director of Research at the University of Houston's Recovering the US Hispanic Literary Heritage Project, **Dr. Carolina Villaroel**. Together with Dr. Kreitz, our participant scholars will receive hands-on training in Digital Humanities research and methodology and given access to our database of newspapers to incorporate into their research and/or teaching modules.

Finally, on Friday night, we will host a second event open to the community-at-large. Local historian **Maura Barrios**, whose presentation, “West Tampa: The Living Museum,” was enormously popular with our 2019 NEH Scholars, will once again share her interactive, multimedia memoir of life in Tampa's largest Hispanic neighborhood. And on Monday, after the morning workshop, Ms. Barrios will lead interested participants on a guided tour of West Tampa.

WEEK FOUR: RESEARCH AND PRESENTATIONS

The primary goal of Week Four is to give participants ample time to develop their teaching modules or research projects in preparation for the two-day conference that will bring an end to the institute. To that end, no mandatory sessions are scheduled after the Digital Humanities workshop on Monday morning. In addition to being available to assist the participants in the development of their research prospectuses or teaching modules, the directors will offer a workshop on the presentation of these items for any who are interested. Free transportation to the USF Library, Tampa Bay History Center, Ybor City or any other place of interest will be provided throughout the week for participants who wish to engage in archival research. Our culminating activity will take the form of a professional two-day conference (Thursday and Friday), during which participants will be grouped into panels to present their projects and receive feedback and discussion.